

REMARKS

Claims 1-15 are pending in this application. In the Office Action of December 13, 2004, the Abstract of the Invention was objected to. Claims 1-2, 4, 6-8, and 12-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,971,983 (Lesh) and claims 1-7 and 10-15 were rejected as being anticipated under §102(e) by U.S. Patent No. 6,332,880 (Yang). Claim 9 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Lesh in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,237,605 (Vaska).

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections and objections are requested for the reasons stated below.

Objection to the Abstract

The Abstract of the Invention has been amended to delete the term "comprising." Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the objection to the Abstract be withdrawn.

35 U.S.C. § 102 Rejections

Claims 1-2, 4, 6-8, and 12-13 have been rejected as being anticipated by Lesh and claims 1-7 and 10-15 have been rejected as being anticipated by Yang. Claim 1, as presently presented, recites a guiding introducer that is slidable within the sheath. Neither Lesh nor Yang disclose a guiding introducer that slides within a sheath. Thus, Yang and Lesh fail to anticipate claims 1-8

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and 10-15 of the present application.

35 U.S.C. §103 Rejections

Claim 9 is rejected as being unpatentable over Lesh in view of Vaska. Claim 9 is dependent upon claim 1. As stated above, Lesh fails to disclose a guiding introducer slidable within a sheath. Thus, even if Lesh were combined with Vaska, it would not result in the present invention as recited in claim 9.

CONCLUSION

Every effort has been made to particularly and distinctly define the subject matter of the invention. The claims are definite, and are patentable over the prior art of record. For all the foregoing reasons, the differences between the invention and the prior art of record are such that the subject matter claimed as a whole is patentable over the prior art cited by the Examiner. Reconsideration and allowance of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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